

A Ghost's Funeral

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A Ghost's Funeral

by [lumosatnight](#)

Summary

A story about life and love when life is already gone.

Notes

Written for [HP Fearfest](#) 2022 for the prompts *ghost story* and *family*. I wouldn't exactly put this story in the horror genre, but it does contain ghosts! Just an angsty little ficlet about what if Fred and Cedric both became ghosts after they died? Happy spooky season 🧛

HP Fearfest 2022

A GHOST'S FUNERAL

Cedric/Fred, G, 1.1k

BY

LUMOSATNIGHT

victory is a lie

it is a lie we tell our children at night

a lie the papers will shove in our faces over mourning coffee

there is no true victory in war

only the dead, the dying, and the grieving

trapped together

watching the world burn

It starts right after the Battle of Hogwarts, so many new spirits roaming the grounds, lost with nowhere to go. Cedric grabs his broom and flies out to meet them. He holds their hand, gently guides them down the path, watches them disappear into the ether beyond—a place he will never see.

“Need any help with that?” It’s one of the twins, hair as red as the blood that covers the walls. His outline shimmers like he’s there but not quite.

“Sure,” says Cedric, tossing him a broom. Fred catches it one-handed and smiles. He has a beautiful smile.

He soars off without a backward glance, and Cedric watches him go, his heart heavy, his steps light. He turns to the next soul in line, a small Ravenclaw girl with tears still glistening on her cheeks and nettles caught in her hair.

“Are you ready?” he says, holding out his hand and pulling her onto the back of the broom.

Weightlessness is an odd feeling, one he still hasn’t gotten used to.

He's there, but he's not. He takes up space, but the space is empty. He is, but he isn't.

The girl curls her small hands around his waist. He feels them but not really, more like the imprint of them. "Will it hurt?" the girl says into his back. Quietly. Softly. Maybe, she hasn't said anything at all.

"I wouldn't know," Cedric replies, and they rise into the sky.

It takes them hours, flying high and low, swooping fast and slow. Fred does a tuck-and-roll, his blood-red hair shifting in the nonexistent breeze. He smiles over at Cedric. Effortless. Free.

"So, how long have you been doing this?" he says, coming to a stop by Cedric's side.

Cedric raises a single eyebrow.

"Ah," Fred says, instantly chastised. He looks out onto the empty grounds. The castle's inhabitants—or what's left of them—are long asleep or transported away. Back to their fallen homes, back to their loved ones, back to familiar life.

"Do you miss it?" Fred rests his elbow on the broom, a precarious balancing act. One push and he would careen toward the ground. But it wouldn't matter because Cedric would be there to catch him before the impact.

That's his job now. That's what he does.

Cedric looks away. "Do you?" he says instead of answering.

"I wouldn't know yet," Fred says, lips curling into a smirk. "I'll let you know when I decide."

"Yes, please do."

Cedric kicks off from the ground and flies into the sunrise.

The funerals are always difficult. Memories and magic permeate the air, swirling around in golden trails, wrapping everyone in filtered light and gentle caresses.

Cedric floats between the guests, seen and unseen, there but not quite.

Today is the day of Fred's funeral, and Fred is nowhere to be found. Neither is George. Neither is Harry.

Harry is the easiest to find. Cedric recognizes his head of black hair sitting calmly at the edge of the lake. He goes to sit beside him, almost close enough to touch but not quite.

"You aren't like the others," Harry says, looking out into the distance, into the clear tranquil lake. Unmoving. Unchanging. Deceptive, really. No matter how calm the surface, there is always life teeming underneath.

"I'm not," Cedric agrees.

"Why?" asks Harry, turning and staring right at him.

It's been so long since someone's seen him—really *seen* him—that Cedric wants to cry. Harry never used to be able to see him. Back in the graveyard after Wormtail's curse. Back in the cave when he helped Dumbledore hold the Inferi at bay. Back during the battle when he flew by Harry's side.

"Why not?" Cedric says because even if he knew the answer, he wouldn't know what to tell him.

"Am I dead?"

"Am I alive?"

Harry huffs. He fiddles with the cuff of his sleeve. He's always been uncomfortable in dress robes, fidgeting and stiff. "Will I see you again?" he asks finally. "What about the others? Will I see them?"

Cedric reaches out a hand, gently places it on Harry's shoulder. Featherlight. Fleeting.

"I think it's best not to."

Harry's face falls, but after a moment, he nods. "Alright," he says. He stands from the ground and brushes off his robes. He glances back at Cedric, shimmering next to the lake, liquid and air, incorporeal and real.

"I hope you're not alone," he says.

Cedric smiles, his body going warm—more of a feeling than anything, light and love and the warm glow of acceptance.

"Thank you, Harry." He dips his head. "And for you as well."

Harry nods. He walks away and returns to mingle with the living.

Fred finds him later, sitting in the same spot by the lake. The yellows of the day have faded to the blues and blacks of the night. Cedric never changes colour, not anymore.

Fred stands by his side, doesn't move, doesn't say anything.

He knows this is hard. He remembers his own funeral, watching his father cry, watching him fall to the ground and curse the heavens. He remembers coming closer and closer. Hugging him, crying with him.

His father did not see him. No one saw him.

"I think I've made up my mind," Fred says, licking his lips. His head is tilted up to the sky. Trillions of stars, but there is only one Earth. Billions of people, but there is only one you.

"What did you decide?"

"I don't miss *it*," Fred says, "so much as I miss *him*."

"I see," Cedric says.

Fred angles his head down to look at him. “You don’t agree?”

Cedric shrugs. “Missing him won’t bring him back. Won’t bring *you* back.”

“No,” Fred says slowly, “but it’s what brings us together.”

“Is it?” Cedric says.

Fred looks at him, his gaze blank, his brow pinched. “It will,” he says, voice firm. Confident. Hopeful.

All things have an end—a place that they go when everything is said and done, when the last of the castle walls fall, when the Earth erupts in a ball of light and sound.

But what of Cedric? What of Fred?

It is their end, and yet, they are still here.

“Care for a swim?” Cedric scoots closer to the edge and dangles his feet off the side.

“Sure,” Fred says, stepping closer.

They dive, clothing and all. They do not make a splash when they fall.

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